

SC475748

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered to care for up to seven children. The home provides care for children who may have a range of social and emotional difficulties or special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The home was registered with Ofsted in June 2014 and the manager registered in April 2022. The manager is suitably experienced and qualified.

The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual. Ofsted is checking this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

There were seven children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
28/02/2023	Full	Good
15/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported well by managers and staff, who are proud of their progress. Children have positive relationships built on trust and affection with the staff who care for them. The manager and staff have created an environment where children can express their wishes and feelings freely.

The home has a relaxed atmosphere and is decorated nicely. Children's bedrooms are personalised and there is plenty of space for their personal possessions and photos. This gives the children a sense of belonging.

Children are supported to spend time with their family and friends. Staff maintain good communication with children's families. This provides children with a support network where they feel safe to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. One family member said, 'Staff have supported [name of child] to travel independently to visit family.'

Children access a range of activities inside and outside of the home, including horse riding, playing football, shopping, going to the cinema, playing golf and attending local clubs. This promotes children's hobbies and interests.

Children are supported and encouraged to become more independent and develop new skills, depending on their age and understanding. Staff support children to get involved in cooking and tidying their bedrooms, develop their self-care skills and go to the shops, which helps to promote their independence skills.

The manager and staff promote children's education. There is good information-sharing between staff and the children's education provider. The manager remains persistent in his attempts to fully engage children in education. One social worker said, 'Staff encourage education.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The manager and staff work closely with the home's therapists to ensure the best therapeutic support for the children. One clinician said, 'Staff attend reflective practice sessions on how they feel with certain children, how they can be supported to interact with certain children and process their own feelings.'

Staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. Children's risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff communicate regularly with children about any safeguarding concerns and risky behaviours, which helps children understand how to keep themselves safe.

There have been occasions when the use of physical intervention was necessary. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention and use it as a last resort. The manager evaluates physical interventions, ensuring they are proportionate, and reflection is completed with staff and children.

There have been some incidents when children have gone missing from the home. The staff have responded appropriately. Staff try to locate the children, working with their families and external professionals. If there are concerns about risks, staff respond well. Staff have a good understanding of the missing-from-home procedures.

There is good multi-agency working. The managers work closely with external professionals to ensure that the children receive appropriate support.

Staff are provided with regular training to help them meet the specific needs of the children in their care. Training topics include first aid, fire awareness, neurodiversity, individual communication needs, self-injurious behaviour and child exploitation. This ensures that staff have the skills to support children's individual needs.

Positive recognition and praise outweigh negative consequences. However, the effectiveness of consequences is not recorded. This means that there are missed opportunities to understand any lessons learned.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a dedicated, caring and ambitious manager who advocates for the children. The manager has completed a leadership and management qualification. The manager ensures that he is present in the home and available to staff and children.

Staff say that they feel well supported by the managers. Regular team meetings are held and are well attended. One member of staff said, 'I feel supported and able to progress.'

Staff receive regular supervision sessions, in line with the home's statement of purpose. The manager has made recent changes to the sessions to provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on practice.

The manager and staff maintain good levels of communication with other professionals. One social worker said, 'Communication is good.'

The manager has improved internal monitoring systems and understands the home's strengths and areas for development. The managers complete a six-monthly quality of care review. This includes the wishes and feelings of children and key stakeholders. However, the report does not include feedback from parents and staff working with the children. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to fully evaluate the care provided to children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	18 July 2025

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that there is a detailed record of any consequences, which includes the effectiveness of the consequence.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in regulation 45, specifically relating to the opinions of parents and staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC475748

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Registered provider address: Lupton Tower, Lupton, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2PR

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Daniel Arnold

Inspectors

Stacey Ilaboya, Social Care Inspector
Deborah Turner, Social Care Inspector

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